[Shri G. S. Dhillon]

careful and bring all statistical figures along with me.

Now, the following programmes are under implementation by the Board at present: Production of quality coconut seedlings, including TxD hybrids; establishment of hybrid seed gardens for the production of DxT hybrids, establishment of Demonstration-cum-Seed Production farms for coconut; expanision of area under coconut; establishment of coconut plantation on canal embankments; establishment of coconut plantation in khas lands in Tripura; financial assistance to coconut growers for the removal of rootwilt affected palms; promotion of biological control of coconut pests; promotion of irrigation facilities; promotion of primary processing and marketing activities; establishment of a coconut technology development centre.

The basic objectives of the above-mentioned programmes are: Expansion of area under coconut; production and distribution of quality and hybrid planting material by establishing nurseries, hybrid seed farms and community/cooperative nurseries; rehabilitation and rejuvenation of diseased and unproductive coconut palms; development of irrigation facilities; promotion of primary processing and marketing activities; and promoting technological research on product diversification.

Mr. Chitta Basu asked about the import of coconut oil. In the last session when I spoke about it, I expressed the idea that not in the very distant future we will be to stop its import. I still hold the same view that in a very short time we will be able to manage it. But, unfortunately, oilseeds or edible oils which we get from non-coconut or mustard or rape-seed, etc. are not linked with plantation oil, plantation crops. It is not linked with that. But if we consider the import of edible oils we may be de-linked from coconut oil because they are not being treated at par in that field. That is what reply I can say at present.

I thank you very much, Sir, and the Members for the valuable opinions they have expressed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Coconut Development Board Act, 1979, be taken into consideration.".

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI G. S. DHILLON: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be passed."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1987

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, with your permission, I would like to say a few words while moving the Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 1987 for the consideration of the House.

The Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill, 1987 seeks to revise the provisions of Part VI of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.

This part prescribes *inter-alia* the manning scales for Indian ships and fishing

vessels for Navigating Officers and Engineering Officers, the various grader of certificates of competency that should be granted after conducting examinations. The present provisions are beed on generally accepted international practices. However, International community has recognised that safety of life at sea, safety of ship itself and protection of marine environment can be ensured through accepted standards of construction of ships, inspection surveys, provision of life saving appliances on board ships, prevention of discharge of oil by ships into sea, etc. and also can be achieved by better training of persons working on board. It was recognised that a large number of maritime accidents were caused by human error. With improved training and certification standards accepted internationally and implemented, the human element on board ships will be much better equipped to avoid maritime casualities and ensure safety at sea and protection of marine environment.

With this objectives in view at the IMO Conference held in 1978, the International Convention on the Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers was adopted. This Convention lays down mandatory minimum standards for the certification of masters, mates, engineers, radio officers, etc. It further prescribes the syllabi for the examination of various officers before certificate of competency can be granted and prescribes various training courses in relation to first aid, radar, fire fighting, medical aid, survival at sea, tanker, safety, radio telephony, etc. which are designed to improve the skills of maritime personnel on board ships.

India became a party to this convention in November, 1984 and consequently this Bill seeks to implement the provisions of the Convention by revising Part VI of the Merchant Shipping Act. Opportunity is also being taken to revise the provisions about manning and certification of officers of fishing vessels in conformity with the international practice.

One important feature of the Bill is that while the present provisions of Part VI are applicable only to Indian registered ships, the revised provisions are also sought to be enforced on foreign flag ships when they call at Indian ports. This extension to foreign flag ships is essential because the Convention requires contracting States (and India is a contracting State having accepted the Convention) to ensure that even foreign flag ships while in their ports, are manned and certificated according to the provisions of the Convention. The details of the provisions sought to be revised are given in the statement of Objects and Reasons attached to the Bill.

The proposed amendment of Part VI of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 is also desirable because a number of merchant navy officers and seamen of India are employed on foreign flag ships and unless these officers and seamen are certified as complying with the requirements of the Convention, to which major maritime countries are party their job opportunities on foreign flag ships will be impaired. Furthermore, Indian ships are likely to be inspected by the authorities of the countries which have accepted the Convention and unless the officers and seamen are examined and certificated in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, Indian ships may be detailed at foreign ports.

The Bill seeks to amend Part VI of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 for the above reasons.

Sir, I beg to move that the Bill further to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, as passed by the Lok Sabha on 6-3-1987 be taken into consideration.

The question was proposed.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN (West Bengal): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, this Amendment Bill of 1987 to the Merchant Shipping Act of 1958 that has been brought forward in the House flows from certain International Con-

(Shri Sukomal Sen)

vention which was later ratified by the Government of India. So, I have nothing to object to the Amendment proposed. But taking this opportunity, I would like to dwell on certain important problems from which our shipping industry is suffering.

Sir, the problems which I refer to are mainly man-made, and made by the Shipping Ministry itself. If the Shipping Ministry wants, they can remove these maladies also. Now, Sir, first of all, our shipping industry is both in public and private sector—the Shipping Corporation of India and at the same time private shipping lines are also there. One problem here is that the pattern of private shipping companies in this sector is different from the other private industries elsewhere in the other transport services. Here, the Government advances 90 per cent of the cost to the private ship-owners for buying a ship. Only 10 per cent has to be spent by the ship-owners themselves....

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): There is the differential rate of interest. The rate of interest is only 4 per cent.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: The rate is only 4 per cent whereas the usual rate is much higher. My point is that if I demand that the entire shipping industry should be brought into the public sector, then immediately some argument will come: Where is the Money? How can we do it? But, when the Government is advancing 90 per cent of the money for the private shipper for buying a ship, what is the difficulty for the Government in nationalising the entire industry? And then about the money advanced to the private-owners, can the Government say that they have been able to realise the entire money? Till now, not less than Rs. 1,000 crores is still due from the private ship-owners. So, what the Shipping Ministry is doing to realise the money only God knows, and nobody knows abut it. I think, the Shipping Ministry should take some interest in it. At least, the loans advanced to the private ship-owners should be paid back. There may be an argument that the shipping industry is in a recession. Then, what is the position of the Government's economy? Is it not in a recession? If the Government economy is also in a recession, then why they will be advancing money to them and they will be allowed to swallow it up? Government should take immediate action so that the money is immediately realised.

[**The Vice-Chairman (Dr. Bapu Kaldate)** in the Chair].

Secondly, Sir, there are other problems also. About the shipping industry, there was a recommendation in the UNCTAD itself that in this country 40 per cent of the trade should be in the national bottoms. It means, carriers of a particular country should carry at least 40 per cent of the cargo. But now the cargo is less than 40 per cent by the national carriers. What is the reason? The reason is that even the Indian goods are allowed to be carried by foreign shipping lines..

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: May I correct him on one point? In fact, it was 50 per cent in terms of the Planning Commission recommendation.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: I am talking of internatonal figure.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: I will give the correct figure.

SHRI SUKOMAAL SEN: Anyway, now what is the position? It is below 40 per cent because you are allowing the foreign shipping lines to carry the Indian cargo. What is the reason? The private Indian ships and even the public sector ships are not allowed to carry cargo while preference is given

to the foreign ship-owners. This is very simple. The thing is that there is some under-hand dealing by your Ministry, by the officers of the Directorate-General. You may smile. But it is a fact. Otherwise, what is the reason of giving preference to the foreign ship-owners? You know it. You can undo it. If you want, you can remove all these maladies.

SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: And kickbacks with the foreign traders.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: I do not know, how much kickback is realised I do not know. But there must be something. So, this under-hand dealing should be stopped. And our Indian ships, mainly the public sector ships, your Shipping Corporation ships should be allowed to carry the maximum amount of cargo. That is one thing. And there are other problems also with the shipping industry. Sir, there was a Committee appointed under the Chairmanship of Admiral Nanda. There is a clear recommendation made by the Committee. One recommendation is that seamen should be recruited from those who are registered and two points are their for recruitment of these seamen, i.e., Bombay port and from Calcutta. Now, there is a proportion also there, 70 per cent from Bombay and 30 per cent from Calcutta. Now, there are instances where bypassing these registered lists other persons are being recruited as Indian seamen and there are also instances where some people who reside in foreign countries, I do not know whether they are Indian citizens or not, or whether they are foreign citizens, they are also recruited as Indian seamen, depriving those who have been registered in Bombay and Calcutta ports. Why are these things done? Unless there are some malpractices within the Shipping Ministry, how it can be that those names which are registered they are not being recruited and others are being recruited.

Then, Sir, there is another point. According to proportion, the ratio is 70 per cent from Bombay and 30 per cent from Calcutta. Now, the ratio of proportion of recruitment in Calcutta it has come down to 17 or 18 per cent. Because of this, under-hand things are going on. Even the proportion decided by the Nanda Committee has not been adhered to and that proportion is falling down and there are other points also. The Nanda Committee decided that there should be some unemployment fund. At present the position is that after a seaman returns from one voyage he has to stay in India for four to five years, minimum 4 to 5 years he has to stay unemployed, and for that the Nanda Committee decided that there should be an unemployment fund so that help could be given out of it to those seamen. But till now, even though several years have passed since the Nanda Committee made this recommendation, this one beneficial recommendation of Nanda Committee has not been implemented by our Ministry. I would like to know what is the reason. What is the reason that it has not been done.

Then, Sir, there are other points also. We have the national maritime board. How does it function? We have the national shipping board. How does it function? I would like to draw attention to the pick and choose procedure adopted by the Government for talking to the unions. This forward seamen's union is a recognised union of seamen. Since it is a fighting union, uncompromisingly they fight, they have no representation in the national maritime board. But other pliant unions have representation. Why this forward seamen's union which is a recognised body, recognised by the Government itself, it does not find any representation on the board? And then the national shipping board they are to look after everything of the shipping industry, how the national shipping board is functioning. It meets twice or thrice a year, that too with short notice, and even when notice is given again after a week or ten days, the date is changed, and members are put into difficulty. They cannot attend the meeting

[Shri Sukomal Sen]

and the meeting is held only for one day. So many problems come up, but those things cannot be completed and the meeting end and members come back and in this way the national shipping board is functioning. How can we expect improvement in the shipping industry? Only talk of recession and recession will not help. The national maritime board, the national shipping board, all these boards are for specific purposes and there are people's representatives, Members of Parliament, and the boards should be allowed to function properly.

Then, Sir, I would like to mention *another thing. You must have seen how* the Ministry is functioning lately. In Calcutta port there was a big movement. The Shipping Corporation of India came to an agreement with the Bombay based *union, which agreement* went against seamen's interests. Now the forward seamen's union which has a strong base in Calcutta port, they opposed it, because the Government sought to implement those agreements upon seamen who are members of forward seamen's union. They opposed it and the Minister must be remembering that nine ships of the Shipping Corporation of India were held up in Calcutta port by the seamen because they demanded that that agreement should not be implemented on the seamen who are unwilling to accept it. And after the intervention of the Chief Minister of West Bengal, those ships were allowed to sail.

Then, this Forward Seamen's Union went to Calcutta High Court and the Calcutta High Court decreed that there should be a tribunal within three weeks to adjudicate on issues like overtime allowance, unemployment allowance and date of implementation. This decree was clear that within three weeks the Government should institute a tribunal so that these issues can be settled. But even after the lapse of three weeks, after a High Court of our country has given a judgment, the Government is sitting silent over it. What they have done is, they have instructed their authorities in Calcutta, the Shipping Corporation, to seek further time from the Calcutta High Court, of three months. They say that within three weeks they cannot set up the tribunal. What is the difficulty in setting up a tribunal within three weeks? They want more than three months. That is the way they are functioning despite the order of the court. How can the shipping industry thrive? So, the tribunal has not yet been set up. I also met the hon. Minister and told him that after the intervention of the Chief Minister, they allowed the ships to sail and the Calcutta High Court decreed for setting up of a tribunal. But they are not implementing it. And now there is an agitation against it. There are reports published in Calcutta press that the Shipping Corporation of India has decided not to sail ships to Calcutta port, and they will divert the ships to other ports since there is a strong trade union movement. This argument can boomerang. Today there is strong movement in Calcutta port and you are diverting the ships and not going to Calcutta. Tomorrow, if there is a stronger trade union movement in Bombay or Madras ports, where will the ships be diverted? Will they be diverted to Singapore or to Japan? Then the ships of the Shipping Corporation of India will not go to any Indian port if there is a strong trade union movement there. This silly argument is being advanced that since there is a strong movement in Calcutta port, they will divert the ships to some other port.

Sir, from Andamans to Calcutta, there is a service. Several times this service was cancelled and it was diverted to Vizag. Once I went to Andamans and talked to the Lieutenant Governor of those Islands and he told me, yes, it is a very wrong decision because most of the people who travel to mainland, want to drop in Calcutta port because most of them come from Bengal or Eastern India. So, that was a wrong decision to divert ships to Vizag. What is the reason? It is because in Calcutta port there is an

agitation going on and so they decided no to settle the problem of the union of the employees and the workers and instead they decided to divert the ships to Vizag. Now, tomorrow if there is a stronger movement in Vizag, where will they divert the ships?

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH (West Bengal): To Trincomalee.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Yes, they will send the ships there. So, Sir, this wrong attitude is being shown by the Shipping Corporation. I would request the hon. Minister to abandon this wrong attitude and settle the issues with the employees, with the workers, so that the problem is resolved and they should try to develop the shipping industry not by suppressing the workers and diverting ships but by following a principled policy.

Then, by pick and choose method, they are appointing officers. There is one officer—I would not name him—one Deputy Director General of Shipping, posted in Calcutta. Hon. Minister has posted a *top man there to deal with trade unions*, a most anti-labour man, who is issuing circulars everyday, threatening the workers, trying to suppress trade union, and the workers are agitated over it. I do not know when that man will be 'gheraoed' and when another trouble will arise. Until and unless that officer is shifted from there or is taken to task for his anti-worker activities, any trouble can arise in Calcutta port unless that officer stops his anti-labour activities. Then, Sir, ...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: You need not be afraid. They have a left-oriented President.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: Let us see. Sir, this is the way the Government is functioning. You can see how irresponsibly the Government is functioning.

Sir, only a year back, two ships, NITYA RAM and NITYA NANAK disappeared in the Bay of Bengal. This was discussed in Parliament also. The Government was unable to explain how these ships disappeared. We do not know what the Director-General of Shipping was doing. These ships were sailing through the normal channel. Suddenly, they disappeared. Till now, nothing is known how these ships disappeared, what happened to them. This is the way they are functioning. They are like blind spectators. Whatever happens, let it happen. They will not do anything. They will remain in slumber. They will wake up only when the workers agitate, when the ships are held up. Then, they will try to suppress the trade unions and other people who are engaged in the trade union activities.

I am not going to deal much with the position of trade of the shipping industry. I am here concerned with how the worktrs are treated, how the trade unions are dealt with and how their grievances are dealt with. Lastly, I would like to say that the people engaged in the shipping industry, namely, the seamen are in great distress. As I said, between signing off and signing on, they have to wait for four or five years. In this period, they face starvation. Until and unless Government comes up with some project, some schemes, as the Nanda Committee had recommended. I reapeat, the seamen will be in great distress and Government will have to face more and more strong trade union action from the seamen and from the people who are engaged in the shipping industry. I, therefore, request the Government to rectify their wrong policies. Thank you.

श्रीमती शान्ती पहाड़िया (राजस्थान): श्रीमन्, जो विधेयक यहां पर आया है मैं उसका स्वागत करने के लिए खड़ी हुई हूं।

श्रीमन्, यह विधेयक बहुत अच्छा तैयार किया है। मैं कुछ बंदरगाहों पर गई थी: मैंने वहां पर देखा कि बहुत सी किश्तियां या जहाज वहां पर जो खड़े हुए मिलते हैं उनमें से बहुत खराब होते हैं। इनका अच्छा रा मैटिरियल नहीं होता। इसके साथ ही यह बहुत महंगा बनता है और इतना महंगा बनने के कारण भी वहां पर खड़े रहते हैं। यह किस कारण होता है, इसकी जांच कराएं।

[श्रीमती शान्ता पहाड़िया]

इसके साथ ही साथ मैं यह भी कहना चाहूंगी कि जो भी जहाज ऐसा होता है उसके लिए बचाव की भी व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए । समुद्र में तूफान आ जाता है तो उसके लिए भी किश्तियां चलाई जाएं । वहां पर किश्तियों तो होती हैं, लेकिन व छोटी होती हैं, बड़ी किश्तियां होंगी तो उससे अधिक सुविधाएं मिलेंगी । तूफान के समय छोटी किश्तियों में लोग बैठ नहीं पाते हैं जिसके कारण खतरा बना रहता है ।

श्रीमन्, मैं अभी अंडमान निकोबार गई थी तो वहां पर मैंने देखा कि हफ्ते में एक ही जहाज चलता है । वहां पर अगर 2-3 जहाज लगा दिए जाएं तो हो सकता है कि वहां की हाईलैंड्स में लोग जाएं । वहां पर आदिवासी तो रहते ही हैं और लोग भी वहां रहने जाएंगे । मैंने सुना है कि वहां के आदिवासी ऐसे हैं जो कि दूसरे लोगों को वहां नहीं आने देना चाहते । तो मेरा निवेदन है कि सुविधा दें तो वहां और भी आबादी हो जाए । वहां पर मैंने यह भी देखा कि तूफान बड़ी तेज रफ्तार से आता है, लेकिन ऐसे वक्त पर बचाव के लिए छोटी छोटी किश्तियां ही होती हैं । मैं मंत्री जी से प्रार्थना करूंगी कि वह ऐसे उपाय करें कि लोगों को तूफान के समय बचाने के लिए पावरफुल मशीनरी वाली किश्तियां वहां लगाई जा सकें ।

धन्यवाद ।

5.00 P.M.

SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, this Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill seeks to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958. This is the second amendment. Basically the amendment prescribes qualifications and standards of examination without which no certificate is granted. As per the Convention of International Maritime Organisation it is rightly desired to improve the standards of certification, training and watch-keeping for seafarers. It is necessary to establish identical standards for all the countries. There is an immediate need to see that there is safety of the Indian and foreign flag ships. It has to include for lending of emergency medical treatment, and departure of vessels should have natural relief work, etc. So, this Bill seeks for proper certification and I welcome this Bill for better standards of the merchant shipping.

In this connection, one thing needs to be clarified. There is a lot of marine pollution. As on the land, the danger, of pollution by oil emitted by oncoming ships is growing enormously. It is necessary to construct such tankers as can separate the cargo. In this way oil pollution would be curtailed to a greater extent. This Bill is not specific about it. I would request the hon. Minister to see that this provision is included in the Bill.

Indian shipping industry like world shipping is passing through a very critical period. The shipping industry is still in recession. As per the figures available, in the year 1985 it was 6.1 G.R.T. and in 1986 it was 5.5 G.N.T. This situation has to be taken note of by the hon. Minister.

As for the bottom of the shipping, it is less than 40 per cent. As our hon. friend has said just now, I request the hon. Minister to have a legislation for specific bottom for the Indian merchant shipping. It is necessary to increase our cargo up to 40 per cent support to Indian bottom.

My friend also referred to private Industry. The shipping industry is in the hands of the private people, though 90 per cent of the funds are given by Govesnment to that industry. But my question is specific. Besically the funds given by the Government are to be used for the shipping industry. I would like to know whether the funds are really used for the shipping industry or they are utilized for some other purposes.

That aspect is also to be looked into and proper and immediate legal action is necessary. Nearly Rs. 1000 crore are locked up in these private hands.

Just now an hon. Member was mentioning about the sorry state of affairs in regard to the two missing ships from Calcutta port. It is a fact, there is no proper certification, there are certain irregularities. We do not know what happened to the findings of the committees appointed in this regard. I request the hon. Minister to clarify this aspect and the guilty should be punished immediately.

Likewise, the Government must have effective control over the shipping industry. Incidentally, Sir, I submit that there is also a need to develop coastal shipping. Such development of coastal shipping has to be integrated with inland water transport as well as ocean-going ships. It is necessary to earmark berths in major ports and there should be greater utilization of the intermediate and minor ports. In this connection, I would like to mention that the total length of navigable water channel in the country is about 14500 km. Of this 5200 km. is suitable for the operation of mechanised vessels without any investment. There is no proper coordination between hydro-electric, flood control, irrigation and navigation projects which could facilitate proper utilization of the possibilities of water transport. I am happy that the hon. Minister has declared Godavari river as a national waterway and he is coming to Andhra Pradesh on the 9th of this month. I welcome this gesture. Moreover, Andhra Pradesh Government needs the water transport in Godavari and Krishna delta to be developed upto Madras. It has taken a long time, but we are happy that the Minister is coming to Andhra Pradesh on the 9th.

The development of Kakinada port is not included in the Seventh Plan. He has clarified that he is giving funds for the development of Kakinada port. It is necessary to develop the Kakinada port. It is the safest natural, anchorage port on the east cost of India. With the present facilities, ten ships can be handled simultaneously at the port throughout the year. The port can be developed as a permanent shipping harbour. Establishment of Godavari and Nagarjuna Fertilisers and also the pulp plant at Kakinada and drilling operations for oil in the Godavari basin should be considered for a major port. The AP Government is pressing for the development of this port. I request the hon. Minister to clarify what are the funds that he is giving, in which way he is going to develop it immediately as a major port.

Sir, a cheap and good transport system is the lifeline of a nation. All socioeconomic progress depends on the availability of a modernised transport system. The national transport system must be an integrated one. There should be coordination between road, rail, sea and water transport.

Sir, with these remarks, I welcome this Bill and I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

श्री अश्वनी कुमार (बिहार) : माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मर्चेन्ट शिपिंग के अन्दर काम करने वाले कर्मचारियों के लिये जो बिल लाया गया है, इसका मैं स्वागत करता हूं। जिन सुविधाओं का इसके अंदर प्रावधान किया गया है उससे आशा है कि हमारे देश के अन्दर जो नागरिक समुद्री जहाजों पर काम करते हैं उनकी योग्यता और बढ़ेगी उनकी सेवा शर्तों की सुरक्षा बढ़ेगी और वे अच्छी प्रकार से अपना काम कर सकेंगे। इस बिल का स्वागत करते हुए मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार के सामने शिपिंग इंडस्ट्री की कुछ प्रोबलम्ज रखना चाहता हूं। यह बात सही है कि हमारे देश के पास इंडियन फ्लैग शिप्स लगभग चार सौ हैं जिनमें से कुछ पब्लिक सेक्टर में और कुछ प्राइवेट सेक्टर में हैं। प्राय: सारे विश्व में शिपिंग के अन्दर रिसेशन आ रहा है। उसके चलते इसकी स्थिति खतरनाक होती जा रही है कि यह किस प्रकार से वायबल बना रहेगा। इस उद्योग को वायबल करने के लिए मैं चाहूंगा

[श्री अश्विनी कुमार]

कि सरकार कुछ ठोस कदम उठाये जिससे जो हमारी शिपिंग इंडस्ट्री आज इस स्तर तक पहुंची है, वह सुचारू रुप से चल सके। जहां तक मुझे जानकारी मिली है, जो माल बाहर के देशों में एक्सपोर्ट होता है उसमें भी एक्सपोर्टर्स विदेशी जहाजों को ज्यादा महत्व देते हैं भारतीय शिपिंग के जहाजों को कम महत्व दिया जाता है। मेरी जानकारी के अनुसार जो हमारा एक्सपोर्ट और इम्पोर्ट है उसका केवल 32 प्रतिशत हमारे जहाजों से जाता है और बाकी 68 परसन्ट विदेशी जहाजों के द्वारा भेजा जाता है जब कि हमारे जहाजों की शिपिंग कपसिटी बहुत ज्यादा है और वे खाली पड़े रहते हैं। इसके लिए सरकार क्या कर रही है, यह सोचने का विषय है। यहां तक उदाहरण हमारे सामने आया है कि जो हमारे पब्लिक सेक्टर के कंसर्न हैं, जो एक्सपोर्ट करते या इम्पोर्ट करते हैं, वे भी विदेशी कम्पनियों के जहाजों से तालमेल बैठाते रहते हैं। शिपिंग कारपोरेशन या जो भारतीय शिप्स हैं उनके साथ उनका तालमेल कम रहता है। इस कारण वहां भी भ्रष्टाचार होता है और बिचोलियों के द्वारा विदेशी धन की जो संभावनायें होती हैं उनको ज्यादा बढ़ावा मिलता है। इसलिए मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार से आग्रह करना चाहूंगा कि सरकार इसकी जानकारी करे और किस प्रकार से हमारी शिपिंग इंडस्ट्री को अधिक से अधिक माल कम से कम हमारी पब्लिक अंडरटेकिंग्स को मिले, इसके बारे में सरकार को विशेष योजना बनाने की आवश्यकता है।

माननीय, अभी हमारे मित्रों ने पिछली एक दुर्घटना का वर्णन किया। 'नित्य नायक' और 'नित्य राम' ये दो शिप्स गुम गये हैं। इस संबंध में कई प्रश्न उठाये गये। मैंने भी यह प्रश्न उठाया था और उसके उत्तर में कहा गया था कि हम इसकी इन्क्वायरी कर रहे हैं। लेकिन आज तक उस इन्क्वायरी का कुछ पता नहीं। मेरा सुझाव है, उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, आपके माध्यम से कि अगर एयर में कोई एक्सीडेन्ट हो जाता है, उसमें लोग मर जाते हैं, रेलवे में कोई एक्सीडेन्ट हो जाता है और उसमें लोग मर जाते हैं, तो उनको कम्पनसेशन दिया जाता है। तो क्या सरकार इन दो जहाजों के सीमैन के परिवार के लोगों के आंसू पोंछने के लिये कम्पनसेशन देने के लिये तैयार है? आज 10 हजार रुपये से लेकर 1 लाख रुपये तक भिन्न भिन्न जगहों पर कम्पनसेशन दिया जा रहा है और ये लोग जो दो साल से गायब है और और अब मान लिया जाना चाहिये कि ये लोग समुद्र की तली में जा चुके हैं और उनमें से कोई भी जीवित नहीं है। परन्तु सारी फार्मेलिटीज के बाद, जब तक पूरी जूडीशियल इन्क्वायरी नहीं हो जाती और उसके बाद एक कमीशन उसकी इन्क्वायरी नहीं कर लेता है, तब तक उनको कम्पनसेशन नहीं दिया जायेगा। मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि इसमें दस साल तक लगेंगे। आप उसको करते रहे, उसमें मुझे कोई आपत्ति नहीं। जिन अधिकारियों ने गलत सार्टिफिकेट दिया था, उनको दण्ड देने के लिये आप यह करिये परन्तु जिन के परिवार के जवान बच्चे चले गये हैं, जो हमारी बहनें विधवा हो गयी हैं, उनके आंसू पोंछने के लिये क्या सरकार उनको कम्पनसेशन देने के बारे में सोचेगी? अगर सोचेगी, तो सरकार उनको कितना कम्पनसेशन देगी और कब तक देगी? मेरा निवेदन है इसको शीघ्र देने का प्रयास मानवीय आधार पर करें, क्योंकि वे हमारे लोग थे, इसमें उनका कोई दोष नहीं था। इसमें जिन अधिकारियों ने गलत सार्टिफिकेट दिया, उनका दोष था। दोष सरकारी अधिकारियों का है, उनकी गलती के लिये उन लोगों के परिवारों को दण्ड नहीं दिया जाना चाहिये, इतना ही मेरा आपसे निवेदन है।

एक बात की और मैं आपका ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूं। हर साल लगभग 250 जवान पढ़े-लिखे लड़के चुने जाते हैं, शिपिंग के अन्दर ट्रेनिंग के लिये। 50 हजार नवयुवकों में से इसके लिये 250 लड़के चुने जाते हैं और उन्हें

तीन साल की आई०आई० टी० में ट्रेनिंग दी जाती है। परन्तु ट्रेनिंग के बाद वे दर-दर के भिखारी बन कर घूम रहे हैं। शिप इन्डस्ट्री के अन्दर स्पेशलाइज्ड होने के कारण वे कहीं और काम भी नहीं कर सकते, उनको कहीं और काम नहीं दिया जा सकता है, यह हमारे लिये दुर्भाग्य का विषय है। हमारे देश में जो बेकारी बढ़ रही है, उसमें स्पेशलाइज्ड लोगों की बेकारी का यह प्रश्न है, इसलिये इस पर सरकार को विचार करना चाहिये।

महोदय, अब मैं दो-चार शब्द और कहना चाहता हूं। कलकत्ता पोर्ट जो है, जो बंदरगाह है वह उत्तर भारत का एक प्रमुख बंदरगाह है। बिहार, बंगाल, असम, उड़ीसा, और नेपाल का समुद्र के साथ यह द्वार है। लेकिन इस बंदरगाह की क्षमता धीरे धीरे घटती जा रही है, सिल्ट हो रहा है। इसको बढ़ाने के लिये आज तक कोई योजना सरकार नहीं बना सकी है जबकि यह समस्या पिछले चालीस वर्षों से है। इसका परिणाम यह हो रहा है कि कलकत्ता के अंदर बराबर जहाज आने-जाने कम होते चले जा रहे हैं। पूर्वी भारत के लिये जो सामान आ रहा है वह कलकत्ता न आकर विशाखापट्टनम, बम्बई तथा अन्य बंदरगाहों पर जाता है। सरकार कलकत्ता के पोर्ट को ठीक बनाने में असक्षम रही है। मैं सरकार से आग्र[illegible]चाहता हूं कि कलकत्ता का जो बंदरगाह है वह पूरे भारत का समुद्री द्वार है और किसी भी संकट के समय, अरुणाचल पर अगर संकट आ जाये तो वहां के लिये सामान बंबई से भेजना कठिन होगा और इसके लिये कलकत्ता सुविधाजनक है। इसलिये उनको बनाने की कोई योजना सरकार को बनानी चाहिए। मैं महोदय, आपके सामने कुछ आंकड़े देना चाहूंगा कि कलकत्ता में माल का आवागमन कैसे घटता चला जा रहा है। कलकत्ता में 20 वर्ष पूर्व 7.8 मिलियन टन सामान ढोया गया। 1982-83 में घटकर 3.28 मिलियन टन आ गया और 1985-86 में यह और भी घटकर 2.85 हो गया। ये आंकड़े दर्शाते हैं कि धीरे धीरे कलकत्ता पोर्ट से माल का आवागमन किस प्रकार से घटता चला गया है, इसके मैं आपको उदाहरण दे रहा हूं। इसका परिणाम, जो हमने वहां के वरकर्स के लिये कलकत्ता डाक लेबर बोर्ड बनाया है जिसके अंदर 17 रजिस्टर्ड इम्पालयर हैं, 27 कैटेगरी के रजिस्टर्ड वरकर्स हैं, उनके सामने एक विशेष संकट खड़ा हो गया है। उन्होंने तमाम मेहनत करके 1982-83 में 75.9 टन हुक पर शिप जो उनकी प्रोडक्टिविटी थी उसको 1985-86 में 84.03 किया है। परन्तु इसके बाद भी काम कितना मिल रहा है, महीने में 12.01 डे जब कि उनको एश्योर्ड शिप वेज देना पड़ता है 27.05 इसमें खासकर जो पेंकर्स, स्टिचर और शिपिंग क्लर्क्स वरकर्स हैं उनके सामने एक प्रश्नवाचक चिह्न खड़ा हो गया है कि उनका भविष्य क्या होगा इसके कारण वहां पर डेपिसिट बढ़ता जा रहा है, घाटा बढ़ता जा रहा है। मैं सरकार से निवेदन करूंगा कि इसकी ओर ध्यान दे, कलकत्ता पोर्ट की ओर ध्यान दें, वहां के मजदूरों की ओर ध्यान दें और कलकत्ता पोर्ट की ओर कलकत्ता पोर्ट वर्कर की सुविधाएं बढ़ाने के लिए कुछ सीधे कदम उठाएं। अंत में मैं दो बातें और कहना चाहता हूं। इनलैंड ट्रांसपोर्ट भी अब मंत्री महोदय के पास चला गया है। बक्सर या पटना से लेकर कलकत्ता तक नदी के द्वारा बहुत सा माल आ सकता है उसके बारे में सरकार क्या सोच रही है। कुछ योजना के बारे में हम लोग कभी कभी अखबारों में पढ़ते हैं अगर वह योजना बनी तो उस के माध्यम से बिहार से, उत्तर प्रदेश से वाराणसी से ले कर कलकत्ता तक बहुत सा ट्रफिक उधर आ जा सकता है जो सस्ता पड़ेगा। इसके कारण वहां बहुत बड़ा इम्पलायमेंट खड़ा होगा।

अंत में मैं एक छोटी सी समस्या की ओर मन्त्री जी का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूं। भागलपुर से उत्तर बिहार जाने के लिये जो उसी कमिश्नरी में पड़ता है उसी जिला का भाग है महादेव घाट तक स्टीमर चलता था अब उस ने वह बन्द कर दिया और कहा कि हम ने इनलैंड ट्रांस्पोर्ट को दे दिया है लेकिन इनलैंड ट्रांस्पोर्ट वाले कहते हैं कि हम अभी सोच रहे हैं। साल भर से वहां के यात्रियों को आने जाने के लिये कोई सुविधा नहीं है। जो प्राइवेट फेरीज है वे चार पांच गुना दाम ले रहे हैं। वह दोनों जिले उसी कमिश्नरी

[श्री अश्विनी कुमार]

में है। सब प्रकार से हजारों लोगों का प्रति दिन आना जाना है उनको अब नीयरेस्ट फरक्का हो कर जाना पड़ेगा या मुकामा हो कर जाना पड़ेगा परन्तु वहां पर आप जहाज देने की कृपा करें जो कि भागलपुर की जनता की बहुत दिनों से मांग है। इसलिए उसकी ओर मैं आपका ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूं। बिहार वैसे ही पिछड़ा हुआ है और स्टीमर को बन्द कर के जो सुविधा थी वह भी हटा ली गई है। रेलवे का स्टीमर चल रहा था जो सुविधा दी वह हटा ली गई है और प्राइवेट ओनर्स को वहां पर सुविधा दे दी गई है। क्या मंत्री महोदय वहां पर एक जहाज चला कर वहां की जनता के आंसू पोंछने का प्रयास करेंगे। इन शब्दों के साथ मैं जो बिल मंत्री जी लाए हैं उसका समर्थन करता हूं।

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : First, to begin with let me thank all the hon. Members who have taken interest to give thir suggestions, especially on such a technical subject which really requires background and one has also to really put in efforts to give nice suggestions.

My colleague, Sen Ji has pointed out a lot of things. I think on some points he is very right and I share his feelings and views, but on some of the points he seems to be totally misinformed. Or he has not made efforts to get the correct information. He has met me twice or thrice. I would have passed on the correct information to him, if I was asked.

Shipping industry has to be taken on a different pattern. When we started the shipping industry, it was a private company. To encourage it everybody can say that shipping can be nationalised. I do not deny that view, but what we started with and how we have reached this stage? In this period of recession today, the shipping industry of our country is one of the proud shipping industries which is sustaining recession. You go to any other developing country or even to a developed country, their shipping has totally gone in losses. They are subsiding their shipping industry from their Budget, but we have sustained it to a greater degree.

It is a fact that a lot of help has been given to the shipping industry. That is how we could build it up. That is how we could bring the shipping industry to this degree today. we have two-thirds of public sector today and one-third of private sector. Tonnage-wise also we have majority with the public sector. It is not only the shipping industry, but is also a second line of defence. We have to keep that also in mind. So, we have to pay more attention to this industry keeping the national security reasons in view.

I fully share what Mr. Sukomal Sen has said, and what Ashwani Ji has said. Before that Mr. Rao also spoke about the 40 per cent reservation for the Indian bottoms.

That is the most needed step today to keep our industry going in a better financial health. The Government has been considering it with great attention, but there were some comments from the Commerce Ministry. They said: if we do this, our export might go down. That is also a national loss and whatever comments he had made I do not totally deny what you call them kickback some arrangements or something else. I had also received such reports that some people prefer some other vessels because of lower rates. Sir, if a foreign vessel is passing through a country and it is sailing empty, he would like to take the cargo with very less rates which cannot compete with. So we are trying our best and I assure the House that the Government is very keen to implement the liner code. It is under very serious consideration of the Government. We will certainly come out to help the shipping industry. We are also coming out with the financial package where companies are viable. The companies which have sustained this recession. it means their intention is good and their intention is honest and they want to develop the industry. We are coming out with some financial package to help them.

Honourable Member, Mr Sukomal Sen, mentioned about Admiral Nanda's report. I really do not have full details about it. But I have a fair idea when I went through it. The hitch is between the Unions when they do not agree. Some unions have said that you implement it and some other unions have said that you don't implement it. But we have asked the S.C.I. to find out and talk to them and see that it is implemented and 30 per cent people from Calcutta are taken and 70 per cent people from Bombay are taken. This problem also would not have arisen if the shipping industry has not gone in recession. Earlier it was one of the prized jobs and people used to tell it was a very good career job and most of the people who have been trained in our country go on foreign vessels. Now, because of recession that outlet is stopped. So the people who have been trained by us, we are finding it difficult to give them jobs. I share the views of hon. Member, Mr Ashwani Kumar. I have met those young people in Bombay and I really felt bad when they said, "my parents who belong to mediocre family have managed to give me this education and now after this I cannot even get a job." One of the young men walked into me and said, "my girl friend is not ready to marry me till I get this job." So upto this extent people are frustrated. We came back and we called all the people and wherever we could absorb them we helped them. In public sector undertakings we have made it compulsory that first you take from this lot who are already trained and how many we took, we cannot give you the exact figures. But I think we have taken round about 40—50 candidates immediately. We also gave a suggestion that for six months you give jobs for 50 persons and after six months, you give them off. After these 50 persons are given jobs for six months and retained on the roster, take another 50 persons and give them jobs for six months. In this way we can adjust 100 people instead of giving jobs only to 50 persons. We are seriously worried about it. We are trying to find jobs for them.

He has also mentioned about the National Maritime Board and Shipping Board, I would check it up why the meetings have not taken place and why there were some problems. I will personally write to the hon. Member and give him the facts which he has mentioned today.

He mentioned about ships being diverted via Calcutta sometimes. This incident happened on technical grounds. There were some problems. The dock has gone down and the ships specially coming from Andamans were carrying a number of passengers and we did not want to take a chance and that is why they were diverted to Haldia. Then there were a lot of passengers being kept there and they were facing inconvenience in going to Haldia and coming back to Calcutta, for a month or so it was done. But after that we took corrective measures. We also made some arrangements if the passengers could be off-loaded in the lighter ships. It is a sort of shipping which we could bring them. But the main problem in Calcutta is, normally ports are on the sea. Here the sea is being brought to the port. So it is a very, very costly port to be maintained and it is with the help of workers and the management who are working hard that they have really maintained their working capacity, operational efficiency, Sir, the House would be glad to know that the Calcutta port has made some profits financially. With all these problems they have to work hard and they have made profits. Knowing the importance of Calcutta, though its maintenance is in crores of rupees, still Government wants to maintain this port due to the importance of this particular port.

Another point he has mentioned about the Deputy Director-General or some office in Calcutta. I will get it checked up and if there is any problem, that he has an anti-labour attitude, I will certainly come back to you; we will take corrective measures; they are meant to help the system.

Then, Raoji mentioned about pollution. We have taken care of these things. We are bringing corrective measures where pollution is taken care of. He has mentioned about decrease of GRT. It is a fact that GRT has come down but in

[Shri Rajesh Pilot]

the Seventh Plan we have some scrapping schedule; might be, for some time GRT will go down, but it will go up when the input is taken care of.

A point was made—Shri Sukomal also about it—about SDFC; in SDFC roughly Rs. 1200 crores are left. SDFC was initiated to help the shipping industry. Some companies really made good use of it and they developed the shipping industry. In some cases it was misused. Let us not run away from the factual position. We have taken legal action against those companies which had misused and we are trying to recover the money. But when the recession was not on, in 1980-81, within one year, Rs. 1000 crores was recovered. When recession continued, the shipping industry could not refund the funds in that flow which was expected. Now the Government has taken a decision to transfer it to the Finance Ministry; it is now under the name of SIC. The idea is if we cannot give Government support, at least through other sources we will collect funds and help the shipping industry.

About the two ships it has been mentioned by most of the Members. I had mentioned it in the Lok Sabha. I don't think I need mention it again. Those ships were missing. A judicial inquiry has been ordered into Nitya Nanak. We have taken action against that particular company; we have derecognised that company which has given the certification for safety. We have also improved our communication system. Earlier when a ship left the shore, for a few days to come we could not establish contact with it but now we have a system, WT, whereby we will be aware that the ship is sailing at such and such distance, in such and such direction. We have taken corrective measures. There are some lags. I do not deny that the system of certification was not that strict, communication was not that strict. But we are now taking corrective measures.

Shri Ashwani Kumar made a suggestion that like air accidents or road accidents, compensation should be announced immediately in shipping accidents also. I may mention to him that we have announced some compensation to those families. But frankly speaking, some of the families are still not believing that they have lost their people, that the ships have been lost, because the timing was such, both the ships disappeared at one and the same time; both belonged to the same company, same firm, same owner. So, some suspicions were created. And that is why Government also did not believe it immediately. There was no movement noticed of both the ships during the same period. That is why a judicial inquiry was ordered. We have taken action against the owner of that company. We have proceeded legally against that company. We have taken whatever action could be taken against that firm or that owner in regard to the safety part of it, how they gave a certificate of safety. We have derecognised that company and no more ships are sent to them for certification. Derecognition of a certification company is very bad for that company in internatoinal law. That was the initial step taken. I would keep track of the investigation and inform the Members. I would carry on informing the Members the progress made. About Nitya Ram which is left over I can write to the honourable Members, if they like, on the progress either quarterly or monthly, on whatever we have done...

SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: What about compensation?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: It is a very good suggestion. I will look into it, whether we can announce it immediately or only after it is known that the ship is sunk. I will look into it, whether we can announce compensation as we do in an air crash or a road accident, whether it is within the rules...

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO (Jammu and Kashmir): It is a good suggestion. You can call it interim relief.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: We can call it compensation. We will implement it after I examine it.

Another thing is about IWT. In the context of increasing road traffic, we set

up the Inland Water Transport Authority to reduce the load on road transport. The IWT is moving very fast. From Patna to Calcutta we have already started activating the National Highway, even up to Allahabad we have declared it. Government's intention is that if the additional load of the road could be shifted to Inland Water Transport, that will save energy, that will save our resources and other expenditure on the road. We are very keen to help Kakinada Port also. I have personally told the Chief Minister that if any major port is to be developed, this is one of the ports to be considered and we will try to give whatever financial assistance we can and we will continue to help because Kakinada Port will help the economy to a very great degree and we are aware of this and the Government is putting in efforts to give whatever resources it can.

Then, Sir, I come to Calcutta Port. The difficulties have been mentioned. I have already mentioend that we are fully aware of the importance of Calcutta Port. Then, ferry service to Bhagalpur has also been mentioned now. I have sent for a survey and we are getting it assessed because it is a requirement of the people. We are also planning to have a passenger service between Patna and Calcutta and from Allahabad to Calcutta so that the people who are tourists and who have time to spend can travel by this. You see, there are to kinds of passengers. There are passengers who have time, but who do not have enough money. Then there is the other type of passengers who have money, but who do not have enough time. So, those passengers who have not enough money can use the cheaper way of communication and we are trying to introduce this service.

शांती जी ने कहा है और कुछ उन्होंने अंडमान-निकोबार की तकलीफ बताई है । एक जहाज और ज्यादा बढ़वाना चाहते हैं । मैंने खुद एल०जी० साहब से बात की थी और जो उन्होंने रिक्वायरमेंट दी थी वह हमने पूरी कर दी है, लेकिन फिर भी अगर वहां की कोई जरूरत होगी और जो बात आई है, मैं से दिखवा लूंगा । साथ ही, कुछ बात आपने शिप कंस्ट्रक्शन के बारे में कही है, कोई कमजोर किश्तियां थीं या जिस शिप में आप बैठे होंगे वहां कोई लकड़ी कहीं टूटी-फूटी हुई नजर आ गई होगी । मैं दिखला लूंगा और उसमें कोई टेक्नीकल बात होगी तो उसको हम जरूर करेंगे ।

Sir, I must thank all the honourable Members now.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN: What about the tribunal?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Yes. We talked about it, the same thing which you mentioned in your speech. Within three weeks it was supposed to be done. I had discussed it with you when you came and met me. We have given it to the abour Ministry and they have some reservations. It would soon be done. We are ware of the fact that it has gone there. But we have taken the necessary steps from the side of our Department.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: I think a ship is necessary to take the file from your Ministry!

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: I will send it by air, if necessary. because a ship may take more time!

Anyway, Sir, the intention is that we must tell the facts. But these are sometimes procedural delays. When I was speaking from that side as a mere Member of Parliament and when some Minister was replying like this, I also used to feel that the speed was very slow. But the procedures are made in such a way that sometimes I as a Minister feel like putting that matter at a much faster speed, at as much a speed as I like, even crossing the procedures. But crossing the procedures is also not right. The moment we cross the procedure, you youreselves will come and say that we have crossed the procedures and that it is not correct. But I assure you that for the welfare of the workers, for the development of the country and in the national interest, we will leave no stone unturned to make things move faster.

[Shri Rajesh Pilot]

Lastly, Sir, I must say that this is the first time that we have a record tonnage at the ports. We have touched 124.9 million tonnes which is four per cent more than that of the previous year and our capacity is more. But the cargo did not go and the ships did not go. But, today, there is no waiting ships at the ports. Normally, frankly speaking, demurrage is one of our earnings and the ports used to earn because of demurranges. So, we have seen to it, with our efficiency and strict monitoring, that there is no ship which waits at a port. So, the waiting time has been reduced to zero in the case of most of the ships especially at Calcutta, Bombay, and the other three or four major ports where they used to wait for six or seven days. This is also one of the efforts of the Department and also of the workers and we have been able to do it. Achieving a tonnage of 124.9 million tonnes is also a good effort and it is roughly four per cent more than the previous year and we will continue to put in more efforts to improve the system.

With these words, Sir, I thank everyone.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. BAPU KALDATE): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. BAPU KALDATE): We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 to 10 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be passed."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE FACTORIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1987

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Factories Act, 1948, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration"

Sir, the Factories Act, 1948, provides for safety, health and welfare aspects of the workers employed in factories. The Act was last reviewed and amended in 1976.

As hon. Members are aware, since the last amendment of the Act in 1976, there has been considerable change in the industrial and technological situation in the country on account of setting up of several chemical industries dealing with hazardous and toxic substances and introduction of new technologies. These developments have necessitated a review of the existing provisions in the Factories Act, 1948.

Government received a number of suggestions from the State Governments, who enforce the provisions of the Act, Central Ministries/Departments which are concerned with Departmental and Public Sector undertakings, Central Workers' and Employers' Organisations, trade unionists and others. These suggestions were examined particularly in the context of the December 1984 gas leak disaster at Bhopal and other recent industrial accidents elsewhere.

It is now proposed to amend the Factories Act, 1948, to provide, among other things, (one) for safeguards to be adopted during use and handling of hazardous substances by the occupiers of factories; (two) laying down of emergency standards and measures; (three) procedures for sitting of hazardous industries and (four) workers participation in safety management.

With the amendments proposed in the Bill there would be greater check on dangerous substances, major hazards and pollution of working and general environ-